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ABSTRACT

The Bureau of Indian Affairs developed language and literacy standards for schools serving American Indian students, based on the draft national language arts standards developed by the National Council of Teachers of English. Standards for grades K-4 list abilities and knowledge that Indian students should have by the end of the fourth grade with regard to listening and speaking skills in English and a Native language, reading ability and strategies, locating information, familiarity with children's literature with Indian themes, understanding the significance of Indian languages, writing skills, and knowledge of historic forms of Native writing and record keeping. Standards for grades 5-12 list areas in which American Indian students should show growth and increasing sophistication, including English and Native language literacies, oral and written communication skills, critical awareness of various perspectives in oral communication and historical and fictional literature, literature appreciation, knowledge of language origins and structure, use of technological forms of communication, creative writing, use of multiple information resources, and application of Native language and experience in school learning. (SV)

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AMERICAN INDIAN STANDARDS FOR LANGUAGE ARTS EDUCATION

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Developed by: **Office of Indian Education Programs**
Bureau of Indian Affairs

*Based on the **draft** National Language Arts Standards*
developed by the National Council of Teachers of English

RC 021587

AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY STANDARDS[1]
Grades K-4

By the end of the fourth grade, Indian students should be able to:

- *Listen for meaning and gain information from spoken English and a Native language.
- *Listen to Indian stories told in the oral tradition, comprehend their teachings and be able to retell them.
- *Speak coherently, conveying ideas in both English and a Native language.
- Speak, using language flexibly for a variety of purposes.
- *Read fluently and independently, a variety of materials including those with American Indian themes.
- Use a variety of strategies to gain meaning from text.
- Analyze and interpret information from stories or other text.
- *Locate and use a variety of texts to gain information, for example, historical materials about their tribe, tribal legends and stories and oral history transcription.
- *Be familiar with children's literature with Indian themes, especially with that pertaining to the student's tribe's and literature written by Indian authors.
- *Understand the significance of Indian languages in past and present Native cultures and their contributions to American culture, e.g. words in the English language, place names, [role of] Navajo code Talkers.
- Use different forms of writing to communicate.
- Use the conventions of written language with increased accuracy.
- Write in an organized and coherent manner.
- Write, re-read, reflect, and make revisions.
- Proofread rough drafts and make corrections in mechanics.

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[1]Standards with cultural references have been marked with an asterisk.

- Show increasing control of standard spellings.

- Show beginning understanding of research writing.

- *Know that Indian people historically had forms of record keeping such as wampum belts, quipus, pictographs -- and that some Indian Nations developed writing systems such as the Cherokee syllabary, and that many Native languages are now written in their own orthographics.

AMERICAN INDIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERACY STANDARDS[2]
Grades 5-12

Indian students should show growth and increasing sophistication in:

- Understanding and using forms and features of language that vary within an across individual speakers, diverse cultural communities, and different situations.

- *Developing and applying Native language literacies while developing/applying English literacies.

- *Understanding the effects of cultural contexts, particularly of their tribe, on what students read, write, hear, say, and view.

- Listening, speaking, writing, and responding respectfully but critically in large and small groups.

- Becoming aware of, monitoring, reflecting on, and articulating their own processes and strategies in reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

- *Developing oral communication skills to perpetuate the American Indian oral tradition.

- *Analyzing, evaluating, and assessing what they read, write, hear, say, and view -- e.g., comparing American Indian and non-Indian perspectives in historical records.

- *Reading popular and classical literature from diverse cultures and times, especially American Indian literature, for a variety of purposes and in a variety of genres, and becoming aware of the ways readers and writers are influenced by personal, social, cultural, and historical contexts.

- *Developing multiple strategies to appreciate, interpret, and critique various types of literature and of the print and nonprint text, including student work -- e.g., evaluating literature with Indian themes by non-Indian writers in contrast with literature by Indian writers.

- Recognizing, reflecting on, and articulating their participation in the aesthetic dimensions of literature.

- *Writing for a variety of real world purposes and audiences and in a variety of genres, including those which allow them to communicate well in their own communities.

- Learning, understanding, and using formal conventions of English.

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[2]Standards with cultural references have been marked with an asterisk.

- Understanding the origin and structure of language to become more proficient users of language.

- Using a range of technological forms of communication, and in understanding and evaluating critically the conventions, demands, opportunities, and responsibilities of technologically based discourse.

- Exploring ideas and feelings imaginatively through a variety of creative modes, e.g. journals, story telling, drama, and media projects.

- Defining, synthesizing, hypothesizing, drawing conclusions, and evaluating with the use of multiple resources.

- *Building upon Native language and experience in school learning.